

## **Disability Awareness Month**

### **RADIO/TV BREAKFAST**

Presenting fun attention-getters to the media can help generate coverage. And one such attention-getter is taking breakfast – along with a written message – to morning radio deejays and TV anchors.

If you're lucky, when you arrive to deliver the breakfast, you'll be invited in the studio to speak with the deejay/anchor – on the air! This will give you the opportunity to announce that March is Disability Awareness Month. You can talk about the many abilities that people with disabilities have, and other important messages related to Awareness Month. If you are using the radio breakfast to promote an event such as a library display opening or awareness activities day, be ready to provide the details.

Even if you don't have the chance to be a radio "star," the odds are high that the deejays/anchors will mention – on the air – that they were provided breakfast by your group in celebration of Disability Awareness Month.

Of course, another type of gift could substitute for the breakfast, and another member of your organization could make the deliveries. In addition, you could also deliver the breakfast or gift to news directors/assignment editors at radio/TV stations (especially if you are promoting an event) or to editors at print media. However you arrange it, presenting an "attention-getter" to media representatives can help generate coverage.

### **Contacting the Stations in Advance**

Call ahead a few weeks before you make your delivery. Ask for the producer of the morning show and explain to him or her that your organization would like to deliver breakfast to the morning deejay/anchor or team. Ask how many breakfasts will be needed. Some stations will request only one, while others might ask for four or more (to include a team of deejays/anchors, as well as a producer, etc.). Also find out what is the best time for the breakfasts to be delivered.

Try to get a general time frame (“between 8 and 8:30” rather than “8:15”) so that you have some flexibility – especially if you will be delivering to more than one station.

Another important question to ask the producer is where the breakfasts will be delivered. Often the front door of the station is not unlocked until 9 a.m., so special arrangements (use of a back door, etc.) might have to be made. Be sure to confirm each station’s address.

It is important to take thorough notes as you gather all this information. Preparing an information chart is a good way to organize the facts. It is also a good idea to send a confirmation letter to your contact. (See sample confirmation letter.)

### **Selecting the “Menu”**

The simpler, the better. Cold eggs or chewy pancakes will not impress anyone. And you don’t need to struggle to keep the coffee hot – and in the cup rather than all over the floorboards of your car – because most stations will already have their own coffee brewing.

But a fresh-baked muffin, bagel or donuts together with fresh fruit and orange juice (which comes in sealed containers) can help a deejay/anchor get his or her day off to a good start. Coffeecake and other pastries also travel well.

### **A Gift**

Along with the breakfast – or perhaps in place of it – you might want to send a gift. The gift might be a Disability Awareness Month poster, drawings by children with disabilities or some other item. Use your imagination to come up with an idea that is appropriate and helps to get your message across.

### **Obtaining the Meal**

Depending on the number of stations you will be serving and the scope of your meal, you might want to prepare the meals yourself (with volunteer help!) or approach a local restaurant to see if they will provide the meal at cost or pro bono (free). If a restaurant provides the meal free of charge, be sure to let the radio stations know this – the restaurant will probably get a mention on the air as well.

When approaching restaurants, first tell them which organization you represent and that March is Disability Awareness Month. Explain why you want to deliver breakfast to the radio/TV stations, and that you would credit the restaurant as the provider of the meal. You also might want to ask a local grocer to provide the food. Once a merchant has agreed to provide the

meal, send him or her a confirming letter. Be sure to order a few more breakfasts than you think you'll need – this is good insurance!

If you prepare the meal by yourself or with the assistance of other members of your organization, plan ahead. Determine who is responsible for what portions of the meal, who will assemble the meals and so forth. Working out details ahead of time will help prevent last minute problems.

### **Written Message**

Be sure to include a written message with each meal. The message should convey at least the basics, such as the name of your group, that March is Disability Awareness Month, who donated the meal and an explanation of the significance of any other gift. It would also be appropriate to mention that you are celebrating that people with disabilities also have abilities. You might want to include some brief information about your organization and how you support people with disabilities. And, if you are using the breakfasts to help promote a specific Awareness Month event, be sure to present all the appropriate details (who, what, when, where, why).

A sample message:

“This breakfast is provided by Stonecraft Parent Support Group in celebration of Disability Awareness Month. (Juice is provided by Dan's Grocery.) The Stonecraft Parent Support Group is sponsoring an Awareness Activities Day, tomorrow, March 8 at the Anytown Grade School Gymnasium from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. The public is invited to try its hand at activities designed to simulate various disabilities.

The Stonecraft Parent Support Group is a local organization of parents who have children with disabilities. Members of the group serve as a support network for each other and work collectively for the rights of their children and all people with disabilities.”

### **Making Deliveries**

One or two days before you plan to deliver the breakfasts, call your contacts at the stations to confirm that they are expecting the breakfast and the time of the delivery.

The number of people you will want to send to make deliveries will depend on the number of stations you will be serving and the times for which the breakfasts have been requested.

Once you have your information chart you can make appropriate assignments. Take into consideration the distance between different stations. Be sure to allow enough time for each delivery so if a deejay/anchor asks you to wait 15 minutes to go on the air, you won't be late for the next station. Bad weather, traffic and other "unforeseen" occurrences can also cause delays. A good rule of thumb: Allow 50 percent more time per station that you would expect it to take. You don't want to be rushed.

It is best to have two people in each delivery vehicle. That way, if parking is difficult, one person can stay in the car while the other goes into the station.

Also, when determining who will make deliveries, remember that there's a good chance that the person making the delivery will have an opportunity to be interviewed on the air. This person, then, should be articulate and be able to discuss your organization and the importance of Awareness Month.

### **Photo Opportunity**

If your organization has a newsletter, a photo of workers or volunteers making or delivering the breakfasts could be a good addition. Your local newspaper might also include a photo and outline or even a short story on the event. (A sample news release is included.)

### **Follow Up**

Have your friends and co-workers monitor the stations – and, if possible, tape any interviews or on-the-air mentions. Then, send a thank you letter to any station that supports your effort by mentioning the breakfast and Awareness Month. Everyone from the station will appreciate your thanks. (See enclosed sample thank you letter.) Also, be sure to appropriately thank any merchant who donates food for the breakfasts.

(Sample Confirmation Letter)

(Date)

(Mr. John Doe)  
(Title)  
(WXYZ Radio Station)  
(123 Main Street)  
(Anytown, Indiana 46000)

Dear (Mr. Doe):

Thank you for your interest in Disability Awareness Month. The (Stonecraft Parents Support Group) is pleased to be able to deliver three Awareness Month celebration breakfasts to your studios on Tuesday, March \_\_\_\_.

(Melissa Smith) and (Jack Jones), who are both parents of children with disabilities, will deliver the meals between 7 and 7:30 a.m. As we discussed, they will be prepared to give a brief interview if you are able to fit them into your program that morning.

We appreciate your support. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to phone me at (123-4567).

Sincerely,

(Your Name)  
(Title)

(Sample Thank You Letter)

(Date)

(John Doe)  
(Title)  
(WXYZ Radio Station)  
(123 Main Street)  
(Anytown, Indiana 46000)

Dear (Mr. Doe):

Thank you very much for the great interview with (Melissa Smith) on (Disability Awareness Month).

Your conversation with her will help break down some of the negative stereotypes of people with disabilities. We've received many comments from listeners who said that the interview was an "eye opener" for them.

Thanks for helping to promote this year's theme. If we can ever serve as a resource to you, please let us know.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)  
(Title)

(Sample News Release)

For Immediate Release  
(Date)

Contact:  
(Your Name)  
(Your phone)

### **Teens with Disabilities Make Breakfast for Deejays**

(Anytown), Ind. – Teenagers with disabilities baked homemade muffins for local deejays this week in celebration of Disability Awareness Month and delivered them to several radio stations on (\_\_\_\_\_). Along with the muffins, the teenagers included an announcement about March being Disability Awareness Month and a message stating the importance of recognizing the abilities of people with disabilities.

“People who have disabilities are still a vital part of society. They work, raise families and contribute to our community,” said (John Doe, chairperson of Anytown Support Group for People with Disabilities).

The (Anytown Support Group) has several activities planned for Disability Awareness Month, including a poster contest for elementary children, mayoral proclamation and a job fair for people with disabilities.

For more information about (Anytown’s) Awareness Month activities, please contact (John Doe) at (123-4567).

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### **RADIO/TV BREAKFASTS TIMELINE CHECKLIST**

\*\* This timeline checklist should be adjusted according to your specific planning timeframe.

#### **Four weeks before the event:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine a date to deliver the radio/TV breakfasts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make a list of radio/TV stations in your area to contact.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plan your menu and decide on a gift (optional).

#### **Three weeks before the event:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin to make calls to your local radio/TV stations asking for the best time to deliver the breakfasts. Determine the number of breakfasts needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine who will provide the meal. Either assign portions of the meal to different workers/volunteers, or approach local restaurants/grocers to ask that the food be provided.

#### **Two weeks before the event:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Send confirming letters to the radio/TV stations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send confirming letter to the restaurant/grocer providing the meal (if applicable).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine who will make which deliveries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare message cards.

#### **One or two days before the event:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Phone radio/TV stations to confirm number of breakfasts and delivery times.

#### **Day of event:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Take a camera for black-and-white photographs.



**After the event:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Send thank you letters to the radio/TV stations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send thank you letters to merchants who donated food.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send newsletters with article about the breakfasts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send a news release to local papers with a photograph, if available.